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February 5, 2004 LR 14

SENATOR CUDABACK: The amendment was adopted.

CLERK: I have nothing further on the bill, Mr. President.

SENATOR CUDABACK: I do raise the call. Back to discussion of LR 14CA. Senator Landis.

SENATOR LANDIS: Senator Cudaback, members of the Legislature, there is demonstrable fact from sociological evidence that relates to this topic and which motivates me to vote for this LR 14CA. It's true that there are a lot of people who will gamble one way the other, they'll find a way to gamble, and they'll do it because they need to, because they want to, because they really enjoy it. But there is a group of people who will gamble if the opportunity presents itself. And there are a number of sins, if you will, alcohol among them, in which the presence of the temptation affects the consumption. The more opportunities that you have to gamble, the more people gamble. The fewer opportunities they have to gamble, the less they gamble. It is not the case that there's simply a certain amount of gambling that's going to occur and the question is whether it's going to occur here, is it going to occur in a casino, is it going to occur in a slot machine. The truth of the matter is that if you bunch up the temptations, the opportunities, and you put them in casinos, people who want to gamble will go there, but it will take an effort to get there. You'll have to get in your car and decide to go there. It won't be next to the checkout line at the grocery store. It won't be next to the six-pack of beer that you get at the convenience store. It won't be at the bar at 11:30 at night when you've had a couple of drinks and go back to get a pack of cigarettes out of the vending machine and there's a slot machine. The total amount of gambling goes up with the ease of access to gambling. And the easier it is, the more gambling there will be. Now, the interesting argument is the choice between what we're facing, which is a constitutional amendment or an initiative process, and LR 14CA, and doing nothing. If there was a box marked "none of the above" that I could speak conclusively about, I'd check that box. I think gambling winds up being an entertainment that reduces the total amount of value of money that you put into it. You take people who are making \$20,000, and if they spend \$100